

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SY-05  
AID-05 /066 W  
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R 151820Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4423  
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN  
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN  
AMEMBASSY NASSAU  
AMEMBASSY PORT

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 1217

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO DIA

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MILI, JM  
SUBJECT: HOME GUARD "RESTRUCTURED"

REFERENCE: KINGSTON 1087

1. DURING A BRIEF APPEARANCE ON TELEVISION LAST EVENING (FEBRUARY 14), PRIME MINISTER MICHAEL MANLEY ANNOUNCED THAT THE HOME GUARD HAS BEEN RESTRUCTURED. ACCORDING TO MANLEY, THE HOME GUARD HAS BEEN PLACED UNDER THE JAMAICA CONSTABULARY (I.E., THE POLICE) AND WILL BE COMMANDED BY A SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE. THE POLICE WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RECRUITMENT, PROCESSING, TRAINING AND ASSIGNMENT OF HOME GUARD VOLUNTEERS BUT THE JAMAICA DEFENSE FORCE (JDF) WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR WEAPONS TRAINING. LASTLY, AFTER REMINDING LISTENERS THAT THE HOME GUARD IS TO SERVE AS A "BRIDGE BETWEEN THE PEOPLE AND THE SECURITY FORCES", MANLEY CALLED ON ALL JAMAICANS OVER 18 TO VOLUNTEER  
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FOR THE HOME GUARD WITHOUT REGARD TO ANY POLITICAL AFFILIATION; "...IT DOES NOT MATTER WHETHER YOU BELONG TO THE PNP, THE JLP OR TO NO PARTY, VOLUNTEER."

2. COMMENT: MANLEY'S ANNOUNCEMENT DEMONSTRATES THAT HE HAS NOT LOST HIS SENSITIVITY TO PUBLIC CONCERNS. AS REPORTED IN THE REFTTEL, THERE HAS

BEEN CONSIDERABLE APPREHENSION ON THE PART OF MANY JAMAICANS THAT THE HOME GUARD WOULD BE TRANSFORMED INTO SOME KIND OF PEOPLES MILITIA WHICH WOULD BE SOLELY RESPONSIBLE TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND, AT THE SAME TIME, THE JDF WOULD BE EMASCULATED. IT NOW SEEMS CLEAR THAT THESE FEARS HAVE LED MANLEY TO GIVE ASSURANCES THAT THE HOME GUARD WILL NOT BE AN AUTONOMOUS FORCE AND THAT THE JDF WILL REMAIN ABLE TO FULFILL ITS INTERNAL SECURITY FUNCTION (IT CAN ONLY GIVE TRAINING IN THE USE OF ARMS IF IT RETAINS ARMS AND PROFICIENCY IN THEIR USE).

3. WHETHER OR NOT THE PRIME MINISTER'S CALL TO JAMAICANS OF ALL POLITICAL HUES TO JOIN THE HOME GUARD IS MEANT SERIOUSLY REMAINS TO BE SEEN. JAMAICA LABOUR PARTY (JLP) MEMBERS HAVE TOLD US THAT THEY BELIEVE IT WISE TO HAVE THEIR PARTY'S SUPPORTERS INCLUDED WITHIN THE HOME GUARD BUT HAD BEEN UNPREPARED TO TEST THE POSITION, ASSUMING KNOWN JLP SUPPORTERS WOULD BE REJECTED. NOW THEY HAVE A CHANCE TO TEST THE PRIME MINISTER'S SINCERITY.  
GERARD

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PARAMILITARY FORCES, REORGANIZATIONS  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**TAGS:** PINS, PINT, MILI, JM  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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